



Disaster and Emergency Management Resources

Hazardous Materials Accidents in the Home

Before a Hazardous Materials Accident in the Home

- Search out hazardous materials in your home and make a list of these products.
- Store hazardous household products according to safety recommendations.
 - Never store flammable liquids or even a lawn mower filled with gasoline near a heat source. Spontaneous combustion can occur if the flammable liquid vapors escape. Store hazardous materials in a safe, dry location.
 - Store flammable products and corrosive products in separate locations.
 - Never store aerosols on or near fireplaces, space heaters, wood stoves, pilot lights, furnaces, or kitchen appliances.
 - Keep herbicides and pesticides, away from any heat source.
 - Store herbicides, pesticides and fertilizer separately to avoid cross-contamination.
 - Store hazardous products on high shelves or in locked cabinets to prevent poisoning of children and pets.
- Periodically check hazardous product containers for deterioration and possible leaks.
- To prevent household hazardous materials from being spilled during a disaster such as a flood, fire or earthquake, take the following preventive measures:
 - Securely fasten shelves where hazardous materials are stored.
 - Store incompatible products in separate locations so they will not come in contact with each other.
- Post the poison control telephone number.

During a Hazardous Materials Accident in the Home

- If the scope and nature of the hazardous material spill places your family at risk, call 9-1-1.
- To the fullest extent possible keep the area of the spill from spreading and ventilate the area if the spill is indoors.
- Keep children and pets away.

After a Hazardous Materials Accident in the Home

- Avoid contact with your skin by wearing rubber gloves and long pants and a long-sleeve shirt.
- Check label for instructions about contact.
- Clean up as soon as possible.
 - Don't flush the spill away with a hose.
 - If dust or powder is spilled, limit air movement in the area and minimize making the dust or powder airborne.
 - If liquid is spilled, cover it with an absorbent material such as cat litter or old rags.
 - Place the contaminated material in a plastic bag and seal the bag.
 - Scrub the area with detergent or water.
 - For very toxic liquid substances, repeat the cleaning process, scrubbing repeatedly until traces of the chemical are gone.
- Place all contaminated materials in a double plastic bag and dispose of according to directions on the label.
- Completely rinse the area and any tools used.
- If the spill is a very toxic product, decontaminate clothing and equipment to avoid contaminating your home and other people and items.

Adapted from resource material developed by the Idaho Extension Service entitled "Responding to Idaho Disasters: Hazardous Materials Accidents"